

and how it made it very clear to them: You do not live beyond your means. You just do not do that.

The interest payments on the national debt are the third largest part of the budget. And the interest payments do not buy a single school lunch, and they do not buy a single road and they do not make a single payment on a Medicare bill.

The national debt rises \$355,000 every minute. In 1 second, \$6,000—just now. That is how fast this is growing.

All of this talk about budget cuts, a budget cut in Washington means something very different than a budget cut in Idaho. In the Nation's Capital, when a Government program asks for a 5 percent budget increase, and it is only granted a 3 percent budget increase, we do not call that a cut. That is an increase. But that is not how Washington, DC, deals with it. We are simply slowing the growth. The budget package that I am backing will bring us a balanced budget over the next 7 years by holding the growth of Government spending to around 3 percent a year.

What about Social Security and Medicare? Well, we do not touch the Social Security pension trust fund, and we should not because it is not the problem. Medicare, on the other hand, must be fixed. The trustees say that it will be bankrupt in 7 years if the escalating growth is not stopped.

When you think about that, if you are now 55 years old after spending a lifetime paying Medicare taxes, there is no assurance that there will be enough money to pay doctor bills when you become eligible. That is unacceptable, and that is why we are going to deal with that in this budget.

The next tough issue is taxes. I oppose tax increases, but what about tax cuts? I will support tax cuts that meet these tests. First, they must not slow the effort to balance the budget. And second, they must encourage investment, help families with children, help small business, encourage savings that will pay for college, care for the elderly and the purchase of first homes.

I will just conclude by saying that after all of this discussion, I think we need to realize that what we are talking about is the money of the American citizen. Again, not the Government's money. It is time that we start leaving more of the American citizen's money with the citizen and not the Government.

This 104th Congress, I think, will go down in history as that session of Congress that finally stopped the financial decline which would lead to the ruin of this country and will return it to a financial stability that we will look back to with a great deal of pride some day.

Yes, we have some real tough votes that are facing us. But what Idahoans tell me is that we absolutely must balance the Nation's budget and we must do it by making it an evenhanded approach so that we can look and see

that our neighbors also are taking part in the sacrifice. As long as all of us are sharing in this, this is absolutely the right thing to do for this Nation.

Mr. President, I want to commend Senator PETE DOMENICI and all the members of the Budget Committee that has brought us this budget resolution which is going to put us on that course so that we will have financial stability, so that the greatest nation in the world can look with pride to know that its future will be bright, that we will avoid that financial collapse we have been headed toward and, again, that all Members of this 104th Congress will know that some day we will be judged as that Congress that did the right thing by action and not rhetoric.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

Mr. NUNN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Georgia.

#### GETTING THE BUDGET UNDER CONTROL

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I would just like to say to my friend from Idaho, I appreciate his remarks on the reasons for getting the budget under control and the historic nature of this undertaking. I, too, although I certainly do not agree with everything in the budget resolution and I have supported a number of amendments and will support others tomorrow, I, too, want to add my thanks and congratulations to Senator DOMENICI, the chairman of the Budget Committee, and others on the Budget Committee, Senator EXON and all who worked so long and hard, disagreeing often, but coming out with this budget resolution that at least is a beginning point in the debate for the road we must travel.

It is my hope that I will be able to support this resolution in the final analysis. It will depend on what amendments are adopted or not adopted tomorrow. But I certainly hope that I will be able to support it. It is my hope that when it goes to conference, the conference will look carefully at what the Senate did today in turning down the very large tax cuts that were proposed by the Senator from Texas. All of us would like tax cuts, all of us would like to return that money to the American people because it is their money, but I think the public overwhelmingly that I represent wants us to get the budget under control and does not want us to take steps that will make that more and more difficult.

We all know that there is going to be group after group coming here this summer that are going to be complaining about budget cuts, many of them with justification because they are going to be impacted. We all know that after that process starts, it is more likely there is going to be fall-back in this regard. We all know that we need a reserve fund because we are going to have difficulties in implementation based on any historical examination.

So it is my hope that when the conference takes place, that the message, by a strong vote from the U.S. Senate, to concentrate on deficit reduction and wait until we have really accomplished that before declaring a dividend I hope sinks in.

#### IN MEMORY OF LES ASPIN

Mr. NUNN. Mr. President, I am deeply saddened by the death of my close friend and colleague, Les Aspin. Many of us in this body have known Les for many, many, many years and worked very closely with him.

Les Aspin devoted his life to public service. In his younger years, he served in the Senate on the staff of our former colleague, Senator William Proxmire. He also served as staff assistant to Walter Heller, the former Chairman of President Kennedy's Council of Economic Advisers and on the staff of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

Les Aspin was elected to the House of Representatives in 1970, and he immediately sought and was granted membership on the House Armed Services Committee on which he later served as chairman from 1985 through 1992.

I had the great honor and privilege of working with Les since I came to the Senate in 1973. From 1987 through 1992, we served respectively as chairmen of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. During that time, when our chairmanships overlapped, we developed a close personal and professional relationship, and we forged six National Defense Authorization Acts during that period.

Mr. President, these years were marked by national defense challenges of great difficulty and complexity. In 1987, the cold war had begun to thaw, but barely so. There were many divisions in Congress on national defense issues, ranging from the size of the defense budget to the procurement of particular weapons systems to the appropriate course of national strategy. At a time when many sought substantial reductions in national defense commitments and programs, Les Aspin provided a voice for a strong national security and a sensible American foreign policy.

As the former Soviet Union collapsed, many sought to rapidly dismantle our military establishment. Les Aspin recognized the continuing dangers facing the United States and successfully led the House of Representatives in support of a measured defense buildup, which was designed to maintain our military capacity in an era of defense reductions. Les was a particularly forceful advocate for defense conversion and retraining programs designed to assist military personnel, civilian workers, and the defense industry in adjusting to a new era with new challenges.

Les was also both an originator and strong supporter in the House, and as Secretary of Defense, of the program